

III. *Some farther Observations relating to the Antiquities and Natural History of Ireland. In a Letter from the late Mr. Edw. Lhwyd, Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, to Dr. Tancred Robinson, F. R. S.*

*Penfans, in Cornwall, Aug. 25, 1700:*

*Honoured Sir,*

FOR Antiquities, *Ireland* affords no great variety; at least it was not our fortune to be much diverted that way. I have in divers Parts of the Kingdom picked up about 20 or 30 *Irish* Manuscripts on Parchment: But the Ignorance of their Criticks is such, that tho' I consulted the chiefest of them, as *O Flaberty* (Author of the *Ogygia*) and several others, they could scarce interpret one Page of all my Manuscripts; and this is occasioned by the want of a Dictionary, which it seems none of their Nation ever took the trouble to compose. I was informed (but how truly I know not) they have lately printed one at the *Irish* College in *Lovain*; which if I could procure, I should not despair of being in a short time able myself to understand these Manuscripts; tho' many of them being but insignificant Romances, it would scarce quit the Pains. What I most value amongst them are their old Laws, which might give some Light to the Curious as to many of their National Customs; and some of their old Poems: But all are of use to any that would compose a Dictionary of their Language; which was anciently (considering the narrowness of their Knowledge as to Arts and Sciences) doubtless very copious..

II

I saw no Coins found there, but the *Roman* Gold Coin of *Valentinian jun.* formerly mentioned; several of our old *English* since the Conquest; and one cast Brass Piece inscribed with *Runic* Letters, which I take to have been a *Danish* Amulet.

Several of our old *British* Monuments, called *Kaer*, *Karn*, *Cromlech*, &c. we met with; and found that they distinguished them by the same Names.

What were peculiar to themselves, were their high round Towers for Belfreys; their round Entrenchments, commonly called *Danes* Rathes; and the Elf-Arrow Heads of Flint.

About *Slego* and *Bali Shan* we had good success as to Figur'd Stones; where we met with variety of *Astrapodia* and *Astrorrhiza*, or *Modioli*, not yet figured or described, together with other Curiosities in that kind; all which (together with the Manuscripts) I have long since sent to *Oxford*.

In the same Neighbourhood, on the Mountains of *Ben Bulbin* and *Ben Bulghin*, we met with a Number of the rare Mountain Plants of *England* and *Wales*, and three or four not yet discover'd in *Britain*. Mr. *Heaton's Chamaedrys Alpina* is a common Plant on those Hills, as also on divers other Mountains and Heathy Grounds in *Connacht* and *Munster*.

In the Isle of *Aran* (near *Galloway*) we found great plenty of the *Adiantum verum*, and a sort of matted *Campion* with a white Flower, which I bewail the Loss of; for an imperfect Sprig of it was only brought me; and I waited afterwards in Rain almost a whole Week for fair Weather, to have gone in quest of it.

In most of the Mountains of *Galloway* and *Mayo* grows an elegant sort of Heath, bearing large Thyme-leaves, a Spike of fair purple Flowers like some *Campanula*, and viscous Stalks. I know not whether it be any thing related to the *Cisti Ladaniifera*.

In the same Places *Pinguicula flore carneo minore* is a common Plant, and a sort of *Ros Solis*, which I take to be undescribed.

*Sedum ferratum foliis pediculis oblongis insidentibus* is exceeding common on all the Mountainous Tracts of Mayo, Galloway, and Keri.

On the Mountains of Keri, *Sanicula guttata* grows in abundance ; together with some other rare Plants, as the *Arbutus*. *Cotyledon hirsuta*. *Cirsium humile montanum* *Cynoglossi folio polyanthemum* R. Syn. *Alchimilla Alpina pentaphyllos*. *Sanicula aizoides inter guttatam & Sedum ferratum ambigens*. *Veronica procumbens maxima*, an N. D ? &c. But the Tories frustrated our Curiosity here, tho' no where else in the Kingdom.

*Pentaphylloides fruticosa* we found plentifully amongst Lime-Stone Rocks on the Banks of *Loch Crib* in the County of Calloway ; and Dr. Merret's *Vaccinia rubra foliis Myrtinis crispis* (a very beautiful Plant) we found to be no rarity in this Kingdom.

We have preserved of all these, and some more I have not time to mention ; as also of such Marine Plants as had not occur'd in *Wales*.

We met with some Marine Animals of the Exanguious kind, that were Strangers to us ; and have preserved by Figures and dried Paterns what we could.—— I am,

Honoured Sir,

Your Obedient humble Servant,

E. LHWYD.